

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

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BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: PRAVDA CONTINUES CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISRAELI MILITARISM

1. SUMMARY. PRAVDA'S TREATMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST IN ITS
AUTHORITATIVE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW SEPTEMBER 22
APPEARS TO BE TAKING A NEW TACK ON THE POST-SINAI II
SITUATION. EARLIER CRITICISM OF THE AGREEMENT FOCUSED
PRIMARILY ON ITS FAILURE TO SOLVE THE "CORE PROBLEMS" --
RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM
ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORY. THE NEW LINE DIRECTS INCREASING
CRITICISM ONTO THE THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF ALL
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ARAB STATES ALLEGEDLY INHERENT IN ISRAELI ACQUISITION

OF MASSIVE U.S. ARMS AID, THOUGH IT CONTINUES TO PAY LIP SERVICE TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE "CORE PROBLEMS" THE SOVIETS MAY REASON THAT ARAB OPPOSITION WOULD BE MORE EASILY INCITED BY STRESS ON DIRECT SECURITY INTERESTS OF THESE STATES THAN BY THE ONCE POWERFUL CALL FOR DEFENSE OF PALESTINIAN INTERESTS. WE NOTE THAT TASS ENGLISH ALSO CARRIED EXCERPTS OF THIS COMMENTARY -- AN INDICATION THAT THE AUTHORS WANTED THE WIDEST POSSIBLE DISSEMINATION. END SUMMARY.

2. RATHER THAN DIRECT COMMENTS AT WHAT IT CONSIDERS THE FLAWS IN SINAI II, PRAVDA'S INTERNATIONAL REVIEW SEPTEMBER 21 CONCENTRATES ON HIGHLIGHTING ISRAEL'S "AGGRESSION". AND, ESPECIALLY, THE INCREASED THREAT TO THE ARABS ISRAEL REPRESENTS IN THE WAKE OF THE EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT. FOCUSING ON THE PROVISIONS OF THE SECRET U.S-ISRAELI MEMORANDUM, PRAVDA EXPRESSES UNDERSTANDING FOR "THOSE ARAB PUBLIC CIRCLES WHICH SEE IN THE SECRET AMERICAN-ISRAELI DOCUMENTS A SERIOUS DANGER TO THE PEACE EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST." PRAVDA EMPHASIZES THE ALLEGED INCREASED DANGER TO ARAB POPULATION CENTERS WHICH NEW AMERICAN WEAPONS IN THE HANDS OF THE ISRAELIS WOULD REPRESENT. AS AN EXAMPLE OF ISRAELI BELLICOSITY, THE ARTICLE CITES ISRAELI "PROVOCATIONS" AGAINST LEBANON AT A TIME WHEN THAT COUNTRY IS TORN BY INTERNAL POLITICAL CONFLICTS.

3. PRAVDA CONCLUDES THAT "THE RULING CIRCLES OF ISRAEL" REGARD THE PRESENT PARTIAL STEPS AS A WAY TO DELAY "ENDLESSLY" A FINAL SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM, SPECIFICALLY THE QUESTION OF SATISFYING THE LEGITIMATE DEMANDS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE FOR A "NATIONAL HOME." THIS, ACCORDING TO PRAVDA, REPRESENTS THE MAIN DANGER IN THE PRESENT MIDDLE EAST SITUATION.

4. COMMENT. FOR THE PAST MONTH, THE SOVIET PRESS HAS BEEN DEVOTING EVEN MORE SPACE THAN USUAL TO THE ALLEGED PERVERSIVE MILITARISM OF ISRAELI SOCIETY AND THE THREAT ISRAEL POSES. WESTERN PRESS REPORTS THAT ISRAEL WILL RECEIVE NEW AIRCRAFT AND PERSHING MISSILES HAVE COME
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AT AN OPPORTUNE TIME FOR THE SOVIETS. BY EMPHASIZING THIS THEME IN PRAVDA'S AUTHORITATIVE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW, MOSCOW IS PROBABLY ATTEMPTING TO BROADEN ITS SUPPORT IN THE ARAB WORLD BY PLAYING ON THE SECURITY CONCERNS OF ALL ARABS, NOT SIMPLY THOSE OF THE CONFRONTATION STATES. THE CLEAR IMPLICATION IN THIS CAMPAIGN IS THAT MOSCOW REMAINS THE ARABS' ONLY TRUE BENEFACITOR AND PROTECTOR, AND THAT UNITY IN THE FACE OF ISRAELI

STRENGTH PROVIDES MORE SECURITY THAN DOES THE
PURSUIT OF SEPARATE AGREEMENTS.

5. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT, IN DISCUSSING THE
PALESTINIANS, PRAVDA'S WRITER RESURRECTS THE LESS
SPECIFIC TERM "NATIONAL HOME" (OCHAG), WHICH BREZHNEV
FIRST USED IN 1974, RATHER THAN CALLING FOR THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE.
WE DO NOT ASCRIBE PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE TO THIS
SINGLE APPEARANCE, BUT WILL BE WATCHING TO SEE IF
THE TERM MAKES A GENERAL COMEBACK.
MATLOCK

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